

TIME
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CIA4.02 C.22 pistol
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EXCERPT

CRIME

New Mafia Killer: A Silenced .22

Mafia Hot Line. Detective fiction has it that the .22-cal. pistol with its tiny one-ounce slug is a gnat swatter, at its worst a woman's weapon snatched from a purse to dispatch an errant lover. No self-respecting all-pro killer would carry one. The facts, however, are otherwise. The CIA has long preferred the .22. The agency's predecessor, the Office of Strategic Services, developed a silencer-equipped Hi-Standard .22-cal. automatic pistol during World War II. It turned out to be the only production-model handgun that can be effectively silenced, and it has been the favorite of spooks ever since. Now, says the FBI, the .22 has found new fans.